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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/536,482

10/31/2005

Ragnar Bendiksen

PN0299

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36335 7590 08/20/2008

GE HEALTHCARE, INC.  
IP DEPARTMENT  
101 CARNEGIE CENTER  
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EXAMINER

CHENG, JACQUELINE

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3768

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

08/20/2008

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b> 10/536,482	<b>Applicant(s)</b> BENDIKSEN ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b> JACQUELINE CHENG	<b>Art Unit</b> 3768	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

### Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 31 October 2005.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**.                      2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

### Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 10 and 11 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-8, 10 and 11 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) 3-5 and 11 is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

### Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 31 October 2005 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All    b) ☐ Some \*    c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

### Attachment(s)

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)            | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)           |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)   | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____                                      |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>5/24/05 4/15/08</u>   | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____                          |

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 101***

1. 35 U.S.C. 101 reads as follows:

Whoever invents or discovers any new and useful process, machine, manufacture, or composition of matter, or any new and useful improvement thereof, may obtain a patent therefor, subject to the conditions and requirements of this title.

2. **Claims 1-8 and 11** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 101 because the claimed invention is directed to non-statutory subject matter. In addition to inquiry of whether a claimed method falls within judicial exception, Supreme Court precedent (*Diamond v. Diehr*, 450 U.S. 175, 184 (1981); *Parker v. Flook*, 437 U.S. 584, 588 n.9 (1978); *Gottschalk v. Benson*, 409 U.S. 63, 70 (1972); *Cochrane v. Deener*, 94 U.S. 780, 787-88 (1876)) and recent Federal Circuit decisions, require that a claim drawn to a process must be either (1) tied to another statutory class (such as a particular apparatus) or (2) transform underlying subject matter (such as an article or materials) to a different state or thing. If neither of these requirements is met by the claim, the method is not a patent eligible process under 35 U.S.C. 101 and is improperly directed to nonstatutory subject matter. Thus, to qualify as a 35 U.S.C. 101 statutory process, the claim should positively recite the other statutory class (the thing or product) to which it is tied or positively recite the subject matter that is being transformed. In this case neither of the requirements is met by the claim. The method of triggering is not tied to the particular apparatus of an ultrasound imaging system, nor does it transform subject matter to a different state or thing. The method comprises only applying an ultrasonic pulse and adding steps of an imaging pulse in the dependent claims.

### ***Claim Objections***

Art Unit: 3768

3. **Claim 11** is objected to because of the following informalities: Claim 11 is missing a transitional phrase such as "comprising" or "wherein the improvement comprises" (See 37 CFR 1.75 (e)(2)). Appropriate correction is required.

4. **Claims 3 and 4** recite the limitation "the first high-energy ultrasound pulse". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The claims have been examined as if they read "the high-energy ultrasound pulse". It is suggested that the applicant might have meant this claim to be dependent upon claim 2. Appropriate correction is required.

5. **Claim 5** recites the limitation "the high-energy ultrasound pulse or sequences of pulses". There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim. The claim has been examined as if it only read "the high-energy ultrasound pulse". It is suggested that the applicant might have meant this claim to be dependent up either claim 2, 3, or 4. Appropriate correction is required.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

6. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

7. **Claims 1-5, 7, 8, and 11** are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by Krishnan (US 6,340,348 B1). Krishnan discloses a method and apparatus for ultrasound contrast agent imaging which can be used for perfusion of blood in cardiac tissue (abstract). Krishnan comprises triggering a series of high-energy ultrasound pulses to destroy a contrast agent which

Art Unit: 3768

has been administered to the subject (col. 2 line 32-37). The triggering can be based upon a physiological signal such as an R-wave of the ECG of the heart (col. 6 line 27-33, col. 7 line 55-58). After the destruction of the contrast agent a series of low energy imaging pulses are then triggered at a different point of the physiological signal (col. 2 line 46-50).

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103***

8. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

9. This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

10. **Claim 6** is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Krishnan. Krishnan discloses that the imaging pulses are triggered at a particular point of the physiological signal but does not explicitly disclose what point of the signal. Since the imaging pulse can be triggered at any particular point it would be obvious that the pulses can be triggered at the T-wave of the ECG of the heart.

***Conclusion***

11. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to JACQUELINE CHENG whose telephone number is (571)272-5596. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 10:00-6:30.

12. If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Brian Casler can be reached on 571-272-4956. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

13. Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/Eric F Winakur/  
Primary Examiner, Art Unit 3768

JC